

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Thrice Amended) An acrylic composition comprising a matrix of polymethyl methacrylate, said matrix [comprising a mixture of a syrup of partially polymerized methyl methacrylate containing about 25% of polymethyl methacrylate solids with excess methyl methacrylate monomer, said matrix of polymethyl methacrylate] having dispersed within it particles comprising [75] [80 to 90] about 80 to about 88 weight percent polymethyl methacrylate and [greater than 10] about 12 to about [25] 20 weight percent of a comonomer [comprising an ethylenically unsaturated monomer] that copolymerizes with methyl methacrylate [methylmethacrylate] selected from the group consisting of C₂-C₈ alkyl acrylates and C₂-C₈ alkyl methacrylates, wherein said particles further comprise more than about 0.4 weight percent to about 1.0 weight percent of a crosslinker, wherein the particles are present in an amount of about 5 to about 20 weight percent of the acrylic composition and wherein the matrix is present in an amount of about 80 to about 95 weight percent of the acrylic composition.

7. (Once Amended) An acrylic composition as in claim 1, wherein said crosslinker is used in an amount of about 0.5 to about 1.5 weight percent.

8. (Once Amended) An acrylic composition as in claim 7, wherein said crosslinker is used in an amount of about 0.6 to about 1.0 weight percent.

9. (Twice Amended) An acrylic composition as in claim 1, wherein said particles have a particle size of [250-600] about 250 to about 600 microns prior to mixing said particles with said matrix.

Kindly cancel claims 20-31.

32. A method of preparing an article comprising:

a) forming an acrylic composition comprising a matrix of polymethyl methacrylate, said matrix comprising a mixture of less than about 25% by

weight of the matrix of polymethyl methacrylate solids with excess methyl methacrylate monomer, said matrix of polymethyl methacrylate having dispersed within it particles comprising about 80 to about 90 weight percent polymethyl methacrylate and about 10 to about 20 weight percent of a comonomer comprising an ethylenically unsaturated monomer that copolymerizes with methyl methacrylate, wherein said particles further comprise more than 0.4 weight percent of a crosslinker;
b) curing said acrylic composition; and
c) thermoforming the cured acrylic composition.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein said comonomer is selected from the group consisting of ethyl acrylate, butyl acrylate, propyl acrylate, isopropyl acrylate, t-butyl acrylate, isobutyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, butyl methacrylate, propyl methacrylate, isopropyl methacrylate, t-butyl methacrylate and isobutyl methacrylate.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein said comonomer is selected from the group consisting of butyl acrylate and ethyl acrylate.

35. The method of claim 32, wherein said crosslinker is selected from the group consisting of allyl methacrylate, allyl acrylate, triallyl phosphate, diallyl maleate, methallyl acrylate, vinyl methacrylate, divinyl benzene, ethylene glycol dimethacrylate, diethylene glycol dimethacrylate, triethylene glycol dimethacrylate and mixtures thereof.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein said crosslinker is ethylene glycol dimethacrylate.

37. The method of claim 32, wherein said crosslinker is used in an amount of about 0.5 to about 1.5 weight percent.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein said crosslinker is used in an amount of about 0.6 to about 1.0 weight percent.

39. The method of claim 32, wherein said particles have a particle size of about 250 to about 600 microns prior to mixing said particles with said matrix.

40. The method of claim 32, wherein said particles are present in an amount of about 5 to about 20 weight percent of the acrylic composition.

41. The method of claim 32, wherein said matrix is present in an amount of about 80 to about 95 percent of the acrylic composition.

42. A method of preparing an article comprising:

a) forming a curable acrylic composition comprising a matrix of polymethyl methacrylate, said matrix of polymethyl methacrylate having dispersed within it particles comprising:

about 80 to about 90 weight percent of polymethyl methacrylate;

about 10 to about 20 weight percent of a comonomer comprising an ethylenically unsaturated monomer that copolymerises with methyl methacrylate;

more than about 0.4 weight percent of a crosslinker;

b) curing said acrylic composition; and

c) thermoforming the cured acrylic composition.

43. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said comonomer is selected from the group consisting of C₂ to C₈ alkyl acrylates and C₂ to C₈ alkyl methacrylates.

44. A method as claimed in claim 43, wherein said comonomer is selected from the group consisting of ethyl acrylate, butyl acrylate, propyl acrylate, isopropyl acrylate, t-butyl acrylate, isobutyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, butyl methacrylate, propyl methacrylate, isopropyl methacrylate, t-butyl methacrylate and isobutyl methacrylate.

45. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein said comonomer is selected from the group consisting of butyl acrylate and ethyl acrylate.

46. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said crosslinker is selected from the group consisting of allyl methacrylate, allyl acrylate, triallyl phosphate, diallyl maleate, methallyl acrylate, vinyl methacrylate, divinyl benzene, ethylene glycol dimethacrylate, diethylene glycol dimethacrylate, triethylene glycol dimethacrylate and mixtures thereof.

47. A method as claimed in claim 46, wherein said crosslinker is ethylene glycol dimethacrylate.

48. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said crosslinker is present in an amount of about 0.5 to about 1.5 weight percent.

49. A method as claimed in claim 48, wherein said crosslinker is present in an amount of about 0.6 to about 1.0 weight percent.

50. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said particles have a particle size of between about 250 and about 600 microns prior to mixing said particles with said matrix.

51. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said particles are present in an amount of about 5 to about 20 weight percent of the acrylic composition.

52. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein said matrix is present in an amount of about 80 to about 95 weight percent of the acrylic composition.

53. A thermoformed article having a granite appearance prepared by the method of claim 42.

STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.173 (c)

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 3-9 and 32-53 are currently pending.

Claims 2, 10-19 and 20-31 have been cancelled.

Claims 1, 7-9, 32, and 37-41 have been amended.

New claims 42-53 have been added.

Support for the amendments

Support for the amendments to claims 1, 7-9, 32, and 37-41 may be found at, e.g.,

Column 2 line 61 to column 4, line 20;

Column 5, lines 22; and

Previously pending claims 20-22.

Support for the new claims

Support for new claims 42-53 may be found at, e.g.,

Column 2, line 60 to column 3, line 40 and

Column 5, lines 5-21, and

Previously pending claims 20-29 and 32.